

# **The Bipartisan Real Emergency Access for Aging and Disability Inclusion (REAADI) for Disasters Act**

Representatives Langevin, *Smith (NJ)*, Panetta, and Sires

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## **The Problem:**

Disasters across the nation are increasing in both intensity and frequency, and their threat to communities – especially those with older residents and people with disabilities – continues to grow. The complex planning surrounding the preparation for and response to disasters requires a coordinated effort between federal, tribal, territorial, state, local, and non-governmental agencies. Disaster management succeeds only when all levels of public and private life come together to address the diverse needs of all. However, without dedicated training and resources for agencies and a place at the table for disability and aging leaders, 61 million individuals with disabilities and 48 million older adults are at risk of being forgotten. Coordinated planning and responses are necessary to address the unique circumstances of people with disabilities, older adults, and others with access and functional needs as the nation prepares for, responds to, recovers from, and mitigates disasters.

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## **The Solution:**

The REAADI for Disasters Act would support the development of disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation plans that are inclusive of seniors and people with disabilities. Specifically, the legislation:

- Modifies and expands the National Advisory Committee on Individuals with Disabilities and Disasters (NACIDD) to ensure that it accurately reflects the diverse characteristics of the disability community.
- Creates a network of centers focused on training and technical assistance, as well as research, to help state and local governments better involve and support people with disabilities and older adults during and after times of disasters.
- Directs the Government Accountability Office to review federal agencies' uses of disaster funds to ensure they have been spent in accordance with federal laws that protect the rights of people with disabilities. Covered activities include emergency shelters, services, and reconstruction of buildings.
- Establishes a competitive grant program to pilot strategies that promote greater inclusion of people with disabilities and older adults in disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation.
- Requires the Department of Justice to examine the extent to which the civil rights of people with disabilities and older adults are upheld during and after disasters.

**For more information or to join as a cosponsor, please contact Alec Goldstone in Congressman Langevin's office at [alec.goldstone@mail.house.gov](mailto:alec.goldstone@mail.house.gov) or (202)-225-2735**